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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TEL AVIV 001585

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

NEA FOR BURNS/SATTERFIELD/DIBBLE;
NEA/SA/EX FOR RICHIE; DEPT FOR DS/IP/ITA; DEPT FOR
DS/IP/NEA;
NSC FOR ABRAMS/DANIN; USAID FOR DCHA, DCHA/FPP, PRM FOR
DEWEY/GREENE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KWBG](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [GZ](#) [IS](#)

SUBJECT: WB/G SITREP: AT LEAST SIX PALESTINIANS WOUNDED IN
SEPARATION BARRIER PROTEST -- MARCH 17, 2005 (1200 HOURS
LOCAL)

This is a joint ConGen Jerusalem/Embassy Tel Aviv cable.

1. (SBU) Summary: Two Palestinian youths were wounded by IDF gunfire in Tulkarm after they threw a firebomb at an IDF jeep on March 16, and at least six Palestinians were wounded by rubber-coated bullets and tear gas during a protest against the construction of the separation barrier in Safa and Bil'in villages, west of Ramallah, the same day. In Gaza, Palestinian militants fired one mortar shell at Neve Dekalim and launched one shooting attack at an IDF outpost north of Rafah the evening of March 16. End Summary.

West Bank

2. (SBU) ATTACKS/SECURITY:

-- Deaths: Nil.

-- Injuries: According to Palestinian and Israeli media, two Palestinian youths were wounded by IDF gunfire in Tulkarm after they threw a firebomb at an IDF jeep on March 16. The IDF arrested one of two youths, while the second was hospitalized.

-- Injuries: According to Palestinian sources, at least six Palestinians were wounded by rubber-coated bullets and tear gas during a protest against the construction of the separation barrier in Safa and Bil'in villages, west of Ramallah, on March 16.

-- Arrests: According to Palestinian sources, Azam Jubara, the Palestinian security officer in charge of criminal investigations in Jenin, was arrested by the IDF at a roadblock near Jenin on March 16.

-- Arrests: According to Palestinian sources, IDF troops arrested a member of Hamas in Tulkarm on March 16.

-- Arrests: According to Palestinian media, the IDF went into the village of Mughir, northeast of Ramallah, on March 16 and arrested three Palestinian men, including two brothers.

-- Security Incidents: According to Palestinian sources, IDF soldiers fired tear gas towards a funeral procession in Budrus village, west of Ramallah, on March 16, thinking it was a protest against the separation barrier. Several mourners suffered from tear gas inhalation.

3. (SBU) POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS:

-- According to Palestinian sources, General Nasser Yusif, the Palestinian Authority (PA) Minister of Interior and Commander of the National Security Forces, met with a Chinese government official in Ramallah on March 16. The Chinese reportedly promised to deliver a package of assistance to the PA security forces. In addition, General Yusif met with a Dutch official delegation March 16 possible Dutch support to build a Security Training Academy in Jericho.

-- According to Palestinian media, a group of gunmen broke into the PA Ministry of Transport in Ramallah on March 16. Sources reported that the gunmen burst into the ministry and aimed their guns at its director-general, Ramadan Al-Keilani. The gunmen, apparently members of the Fatah-affiliated Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, wanted the ministry to license illegal on-call taxicabs to work in Ramallah and El-Bireh.

Gaza

4. (SBU) ATTACKS:

-- Deaths: Nil.

-- Injuries: Nil.

-- Mortars/Rockets: Palestinian militants fired one mortar shell at Neve Dekalim the evening of March 16, according to the IDF.

-- Shootings: The IDF reported that Palestinian militants launched one shooting attack March 14, targeting an IDF outpost north of Rafah.

15. (SBU) BORDER CROSSINGS:

-- Route Four (Salahadeen Road), the main north-south traffic artery, was open March 17, with a major detour at Netzarim Junction. As of March 13, private vehicles are allowed to transit Abu Khouli checkpoint.

-- Erez Crossing was open for internationals and for a limited number of Palestinians March 16, and 1,045 laborers and 174 merchants crossed into Israel.

-- The Erez Industrial Zone was open March 16, and 590 laborers entered.

-- Sufa Crossing was closed for Palestinian laborers March 17, but was open for the import of aggregates used in construction.

-- Karni Terminal was open March 17.

-- Rafah Terminal was open for arrivals and departures March 17.

-- Tel al-Sultan checkpoint remained closed March 17. Toufah checkpoint was open for residents of al-Mowassi.

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KURTZER